

New Regulations and Programs Created by the HITECH Act.

New Regulations		Description
Notices of proposed rule-making (NPRM)		
Meaningful use (issued)	Criteria established for Medicare- and Medicaid-participating providers and hospitals to receive incentives for using electronic health records (EHRs) in a meaningful manner, which includes electronically capturing health information in a coded format, using that information to track key clinical conditions, communicating that information in order to help coordinate care, and initiating the reporting of clinical quality measures and public health information.	
Certification (forthcoming)	A defined process of ensuring the functionality, security, and interoperability of EHRs that meet the standards and certification criteria required to achieve meaningful use of those records. Providers must use certified EHRs to qualify as meaningful users.	
Interim final regulation for certification criteria and standards (issued)	An initial set of standards, implementation specifications, and certification criteria for EHRs.	
New Programs		Funds Allocated*
Regional extension centers (RECs)	Establish up to 70 RECs to support providers in adopting and becoming meaningful users of health information technology (HIT).	\$643 Million
Health information exchange	Support state programs to ensure the development of health information exchange within and across their jurisdictions.	\$564 Million
Workforce training programs	Create several distinct programs that aim to support the education of HIT professionals, including curriculum development, competency examinations, and training. The goal is to train up to 45,000 new HIT workers to assist providers in becoming meaningful users of EHRs.	\$118 Million
Beacon communities	Provide funding to create up to 15 demonstration communities in which clinicians, hospitals, and consumers show how the meaningful use of EHRs can achieve measurable improvement in the quality and efficiency of health services or public health outcomes in a given geographic area.	\$235 Million
Strategic health information technology advanced research projects (SHARP)	Fund research focused on achieving breakthrough advances to address well-documented problems that have impeded adoption of HIT, including: the security of HIT, patient-centered cognitive support, health care application and network-platform architectures, and secondary use of EHR data.	\$60 Million
Nationwide Health Information Network (NHIN)	Create a common platform for health information exchange across diverse entities, within communities, and across the country to promote a more effective marketplace, greater competition, and increased choice through accessibility to accurate information on health care costs, quality, and outcomes.	\$64.3 Million
Standards and certification	Develop interoperability specifications that identify harmonized standards and provide detailed technical specifications for how those standards need to be used; work with health care organizations and standards-development organizations to ensure that standards are available for use nationally.	

* Since only selected programs are listed, the funds allocated do not total \$2 billion.